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PROPOSAL TO DECLARE THE PERIOD OF 2018-2027 AS THE
“AFRICAN DECADE FOR TECHNICAL, PROFESSIONAL,
ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT”
(Item proposed by Burkina Faso)

**PROPOSAL TO DECLARE THE PERIOD OF 2018-2027 AS THE
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SUMMARY

1. It is estimated that 60% of population in less developed countries in Africa are aged less than 24, and this number is projected to increase to another 60% by 2050. This growth associated with lower fertility rates represent a unique opportunity for African countries.
2. The AU Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.601(XXVI) of January 2016, dedicated the year 2017 as the year of youth under the theme “*Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through investment in Youth*”. The theme of the year is highly welcomed given the important role that youth play in society technically, professionally, entrepreneurially and otherwise.
3. The Agenda 2063 first ten year plan calls for the AUC to develop the African Plan of Action on Youth Empowerment (APAYE) and the theme of the year further presents an opportunity to leverage on the actions and initiatives on youth development.
4. The Government of Burkina Faso therefore proposes that the Assembly declares 2018-2027, as “*Decade for Technical, professional, entrepreneurial training and Employment for Youth*” to shape long term perspectives aiming at reinforcing existent policies and efficiently invest on human capital representing the precious resource for Africa. The declaration of the decade represents an impetus to rethink, realign and harmonize policies and existing frameworks at Member state levels as well as AU organs.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT POLICY CONTEXT

5. The youth development policy in Africa has rapidly evolved and is articulated through, among other, the following key instruments; African Youth Charter (AYC), Youth Decade Plan of Action (2009 – 2018), for which a Rapid Assessment was undertaken in 2015 to review its implementation. Agenda 2063 Aspiration 6 which talks of “An Africa where development is People Driven, Unleashing the Potential of its Women and Youth.” One of the key youth development output requirement for Agenda 2063 is an Africa Plan for Youth Empowerment 2019-2023 (APAYE). The rapid assessment of the DPoA also recommended revalidation of the top 10 youth development issues on the continent as baselines towards the design of the APAYE 2019 – 2023. The proposed declaration of the period of 2018-2027 as the “African decade for Technical, professional, entrepreneurial training and Youth Employment” at the XXIX African Union Summit is in line with this policy context and could be broadened to encompass key actions provided for in this policy framework.
6. It is envisaged that the Decade will address the following:
 - a) **Professional and Technical Training of Youth** - It’s highly noticed that the African Socio-economy is characterized by weak structures in providing relevant training and employment to its youth. Tackling this

phenomenon requires sustained mobilization of states as well as major stakeholders engaged in youth development training. The Private sector has a tremendous role to play, and to establish very innovative and inclusive enablers, tailored on the pressing economic needs to deliver and facilitate transition to employment.

- b) Youth Employment in Africa** - The main cause to youth joblessness and under employment lies in the lack of economic dynamism and low employment opportunities in public and private spaces. Other issues of low inclusion are rampant due to low literacy rate and lack of appropriate and relevant skills for the economic activities.

7. The above issues call for innovative approaches and solutions to face those challenges through integrated approach in entrepreneurship and academic curriculums. The adoption of the Decade and its implementation will constitute a great engagement and commitment toward the youth of Africa in finding responses to their pressing needs for training and professional skills.

8. Most importantly, the Decade will serve as the compass for accelerated action beyond the year 2017, to sustain and accompany the implementation of the AU theme of the year, as well as the 4 pillars (especially 1 and 2) on “employment & entrepreneurship” and the one on “education and skills development”.

THE PROPOSED DECADE PLAN OF ACTION

9. The proposed Decade for Technical, professional, entrepreneurial training and Youth Employment should recommend the following:

- Propose innovative educational systems on professional and technical training tailored on African socio-cultural contexts;
- Promote new local entrepreneurial dynamics through leveraging on the human capital contribution, its know-how and local wealth;
- Organize competitions to valorize know-how and skills, reward innovations, artisans as well as original and local projects;
- Declare an Africa Day for Professional and entrepreneurial training.

10. Considering the TVET and CESA Strategies, a detailed plan of action will be elaborated by African experts and submitted at the next summit through appropriate channels.

11. AU Member States, in adopting such a Decade in relation to the theme of the year 2017, are thus reinforcing their commitment and engagement towards the youth while providing them with necessary means to unveil their potential. They will harness the Demographic Dividend in operationalizing AU Agenda 2063, through effective investments in Professional, entrepreneurial and technical training, for youth women and girl empowerment.

DRAFT DECISION

12. The Summit, in the framework of the implementation of the road map of the theme of the year 2017:

- i) **Takes note** of the proposal made by the Burkina Faso relative to the "Proclamation of the period 2018-2027, African Decade for Technical Training, Professional, Entrepreneurial and the Employment of Young People";
- ii) **Declares** the 2018-2027 period, African Decade for Technical Training, Professional and Entrepreneurial and the Employment of Young People;
- iii) **Invites** the Commission of the African Union in collaboration with Burkina Faso and partners of the AU to develop a detailed plan of action for the Decade and set up a Continental Dialogue Platform on Skills Development in Africa. The plan of action will be submitted to the next Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union through the competent organs.

2017

Proposition de Déclaration de la Période 2018-2027 Comme «Décennie Africaine pour la Formation et l'Emploi des Jeunes dans les Domaines Technique, Professionnel et Entrepreneurial » (Point proposé par le Burkina Faso)

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